

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

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Washington, D.C. -- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has surpassed its Welfare-to-Work goals, providing jobs for more than 1,000 former welfare recipients in fiscal years 1997 and 1998.

"This program benefits not only the new employees we've hired, but also the veterans we serve," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Togo D. West, Jr. "We have been fortunate to recruit individuals whose skills will be great assets to VA."

In April 1997, VA set a goal to hire 800 welfare recipients nationwide by the end of fiscal year 1998, under the Administration's Welfare-to-Work Program. The Department has hired 1,027 individuals, far exceeding its original goal.

VA facilities used a variety of local recruitment efforts to achieve the departmental goal. State employment services, state, county, and city agencies and other community resources worked in partnership with VA to provide applicants.

In addition, VA's own veterans' programs including compensated work therapy, homeless veterans' programs, vocational rehabilitation and counseling, and readjustment counseling outreach, in partnership with local veterans' service organizations, assisted in locating candidates.

"Now that we have surpassed our target, we will focus on keeping these new employees motivated and successful so they stay with us for long, productive careers," said Secretary West.